

STATE PLAN UNDER TITLE XIX OF THE SOCIAL SECURITY ACT

State/Territory: Alabama

ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Process for the Investigation of Allegations of Resident Neglect
and Abuse and Misappropriations of Resident Property

The State has in effect the following process for the receipt and timely review and investigation of allegations of neglect and abuse and misappropriation of resident property by a nurse aide or a resident in a nursing facility or by another individual used by the facility in providing services to such a resident.

The Alabama Department of Public Health, Division of Licensure and Certifications, Complaint Unit is responsible for this function. The complaint unit consists of eight (will be increased by 100% by FY93) Licensure & Certification nurses (RN's) specially trained to investigate abuse, neglect and misappropriation of residents funds or property, two Steno II administrative support personnel, and is supervised by a Licensure and Certification officer with extensive experience in health care management, i.e., Hospital and Nursing Home Administration. A one page Abuse Allegation Report form has been developed and distributed to the nursing home industry to be utilized to report an allegation of abuse, neglect or misappropriation of property. (See attachment one) This unit also has in-state toll free: "Hotline" that is manned 8 hours per day on normal duty days. The Hotline also has voice mail capability for recording allegations seven days per week, twenty-four hours per day. When an allegation is received in the complaint unit, a case number is assigned and the allegation is reviewed by the supervisor. The supervisor prioritizes the cases by degree of severity and assigns a survey nurse to make an unannounced on-site visit to investigate the allegation. *(See Priority Below) When the nurse is unable to obtain sufficient evidence to substantiate the allegation the facility management and the accused is notified in writing, and the case is closed. When sufficient evidence is found, the allegation is substantiated and the process of adding the accused's name to the abuse register is implemented. A permanent file is established (and maintained in the complaint unit) which contains a complete report and supportive documentation of the allegation investigation, and disposition of each case.

*Priority 1. (Initiate investigation within two working days of receipt) Physical abuse, temporary or permanent injury, disability or death.

*Priority 2. (Initiate investigation within 45 days) All abuse, neglect or misappropriation of resident's property that do not fall into priority 1.